

Summary of the Minutes

September 16, 2013 Meeting

City of Binghamton Shade Tree Commission

PHCD Conference Room, 4th Floor, City Hall

Commissioners Present: Dick Andrus, Julian Shepherd, Bev Rainforth, Joshua De Marree, Carolyn Wilczynski, Alex Spencer (scribe), Melissa Enoch (staff liaison)

Commissioners Absent: Lou Sebesta

Guests: Paul Palmer, Bill Barber

Minutes for August 19th, 2013: Approved by email

Next Meeting: October 21, 2013 at 7:00 PM City Hall Planning Dept Conference Room

1. City Site plans

a. Previous Site Plans

- i. **Update: 169 Riverside Drive** – Lourdes Road Parking Lot: Commission recommended diversity in plantings. A reminder that street trees do not fall under STC authority was given.

b. New Site Plans

- i. None

2. **Street Tree Program:** Parks received 45 requests, so we brainstormed some alternative sites: the Crestmont islands, Park Ave. (some concern about Army Corps of Engineers right-of-way regarding the retaining wall by the river), replacing NYSEG-pruned trees, Prospect Street by Rte. 17 construction, the city's vacant properties, reaching out to larger property holders.

There are \$5500, and trees cost \$70-\$80 apiece. Melissa will look into a CDBG grant and remaining funds in the DEC grant. Planting will start in early November. We discussed allowing renters to request trees as the utility strip is within the city's jurisdiction. We are not doing a flyer campaign this year but Dick's students will attach additional information to our previously printed flyers for future use. We will issue a press release encouraging requests. Over the winter, we will all try to keep vigilant watch for spots that have wide enough utility strips to help guide spring planting. Citizen pruners can also contribute toward data collection about suitable utility strips and help disseminate leaflets. *(Alex missed something about Josh working with elementary school students to educate them about caring for trees in January...?)*

3. **TreeKeeper and Citizen Pruner Program:** This is a software tool purchased along with our tree inventory. Melissa said that the city was interested in hiring someone to enter data into TreeKeeper and head the Citizen Pruner program (small, hourly job). STC members suggested separating the data entry from the CP program, since both require different skillsets and candidates may not be a good fit for both, while being a great fit for one. There is currently around \$4000 for this but Bill Barber will try to find additional funding. A 100% tree inventory is too expensive, but our tree survey picks out risk trees, which is very important.

4. **Other updates:**

- a. **Arbor Day:** We are hoping to work with the Binghamton Zoo and the Discovery Center for our Arbor Day planting & celebration. There are dead Austrian Pines all over the entrance to the

zoo—can we take out the dead ones in the first island and by the carousel? Parks will help with planting & the zoo will help with fundraising. Can we include all area elementary schools, and have them compete to see which school raises the most funds? We are looking to replace ~30 trees at \$100 a tree. A realistic goal might be to replant 10 trees a year. Dick will gather Steve (zoo director) and Pokie (Discovery Center director) in an office and talk to them about it.

- b. **Letter to Iberdrola:** We will not involve the press yet, but will send the letter, which we edited together at this meeting.
- c. **Andy:** We might invite Andy down to present to us and possibly lead a pruner workshop.
- d. **Risk Assessment Update**
- e. **Street Walk:** tabled until June.